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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the ways in which 56 children in families facing transfer and relocation viewed their adjustment to a corporate move by examining the children's attitudes toward moving, schools, and their new neighborhood. The study also examined: (1) changes in children's activities before and after the move; and (2) factors that made moving a better experience for some children than for others. Results supported none of several stereotypes of mobile children, including those that suggest problems with making friends and behavior, social maladjustment, low self-confidence, and extensive disruption of lives. Findings suggested that although there were significant changes in the children's activities, the best predictors of activities after the move were the levels of time spent in activities before the move. Mother's adjustment was a significant predictor of a child's attitude toward having moved and the new neighborhood. Number of moves was found to be a significant and positive predictor of children's attitudes toward moving before the move occurred. Age of children had no impact on adjustment. Teenagers did not differ from younger children in attitudes after moving. (RH)

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Corporate Mobility: Children's Perspectives on Their Adjustment

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Abstract

This study used children's perspectives to examine the effect of corporate moves on the children's adjustment (n=56). The study was a three step analysis which investigated the conditions under which children adjust to a move. Step one used paired t-tests to determine pre to postmove changes in the children's activities. Step two used regression analysis to determine if changes in activities were predictable in any way. Step three also used regression analysis to assess predictors of children's postmove attitudes toward moving, school, and their new neighborhood. The study's findings suggested that although there were significant changes in the children's activities pre to postmove, the best predictors of postmove activities were still premove levels of time spent in these activities. Comparing this study to studies examining latchkey children, the findings supported the importance of parent's well-being to a child's adjustment. Mother's adjustment was a significant predictor of a child's postmove attitude toward having moved and the new neighborhood. Number of moves was found to be a significant and positive predictor of children's premove attitude toward moving. Age of the children had no impact on children's adjustment. Teenagers did not differ in postmove attitudes from younger children in the study.

Corporate Mobility: Children's Perspectives on Their Adjustment

Corporate mobility has become an increasing phenomenon in our society. American corporations transfer over 100,000 employees and their families annually (Kiechel, 1987). With the onset of increased corporate mergers and takeovers that ultimately effect both blue and white collar workers, one would suspect the trend of corporate induced mobility to continue at an even greater pace. Yet, there is a limited amount of systematic research addressing the effects of this mobility on the children. Like research regarding latchkey children, much of our knowledge in this field is based on popular journalism with current findings suggesting everything from increased life satisfaction, maturity, or self-identity to delinquency, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, or other such corporate casualties resulting from the frequent moving. However, as corporations continue to use geographic mobility as a crucial component to their production organization and as many families are re-evaluating the worth of such a move, we must begin to give explicit, systematic, and theoretical attention to our understanding of the effects of this mobility on children.

This paper begins by examining some of the literature and theory in this field and then works to overcome some of the deficiencies of this area of research by drawing upon social-psychological, as well as human developmental research and theory, and focus on a cross-disciplinary approach to the topic. The

purpose of this paper is to begin to examine and explain the effects of corporate induced geographic mobility on children's lives. The study investigates how mobile children view their adjustment to a corporate move by examining children's postmove attitudes towards moving, school and their new neighborhood.

Research on the effects of corporate mobility on children is sparse and incomplete. As with research on latchkey children, much of the public concern over job transfer and the effects on children has been fueled by the popular press (see Steinberg, 1986). Newspaper and magazine articles often sensationalize the negative effects of the mobility on the family. For instance, a recent article in the Chicago Tribune suggested two teenage boys chose suicide over a separation because one family was moving (Chicago Tribune, Oct. 18, 1988). Another claimed a local community's teenage suicide rate was the result of the highly mobile status of the population (Chicago Tribune, Oct. 10, 1988). Yet another article in this Tribune series proclaimed family ties were 'lost in the shuffle.' In each case a journalist interviewed a handful of mobile families and determined that mobility was detrimental to a child's adjustment, despite a lack of systematic inquiry and sufficient data.

As with the literature on latchkey children (Robinson and Rowland, 1986), a result of the popular press' dramatization of corporate mobility is that many stereotypes of mobile children exist:

Mobile children have trouble making friends.

Mobile children have behavior problems due to mobility.

Mobile children are less well socially adjusted than non-mobile children.

Mobile children are less well adjusted and integrated in their schools and communities than non-mobile children.

Mobile children have less self-confidence than non-mobile children.

Mobility causes substantial disruption in children's lives.

Also, there are few scholarly attempts to untangle these stereotypes. Barrett and Noble (1973) attempted to assess how children were influenced by a mother's anxiety towards a long distance move. Their study suggested a significant negative correlation between distance of moving and self concept.

Kroger hypothesized that residential mobility leads to the development of negative personality factors in the adolescent years. Based on the work of Mead and Erikson, she suggested that this is because "environmental continuity" fosters one's self concept. According to Kroger, as teenagers move into a geographically new setting, their behaviors and previously socially accepted norms may be different and unacceptable from the attitudes and behaviors in the new setting. Kroger further hypothesized that those adolescents who move the greatest distances and therefore perhaps to even less similar communities, and children who move most often will suffer with the lowest self concept. She interprets Erikson's environmental stability theory to be an

important component to children's adjustment. Despite relying on theory and past research, her findings did not support expected hypotheses, instead no significnat relationships between environmental stability and the measures of child development were found in this study.

Orthner, Giddings, and Quinn, (1986) examined the effects of relocation on 2,4000 military and civilian adolescents who were sampled representatively from five communitites across the United States. This study determined that both civilian and miliatary girls were less well adjusted on most measures than boys. Contrary to many popular beliefs, this study found teen's greatest life satisfaction came from both friend and family relationships and most adolescents believed that parent/teen relationships are "going well." Yet, these authors noted that "feelings of alienation increase over the course of adolescence (p. 18)."

To complicate the lack of scholarly research in this field, in addition, few theorists have focused specifically on child's adjustment to mobility. Yet, we can infer from the writings of Erikson (1950) and Mead (1934) that environmental stability facilitates the development of self concept. Garbarino (1980, 1987) also notes that stable family, community, and school support systems provided needed nuturance and feedback during developmental years. Consequently, one might suspect moving would be disruptive to normal child development and especially disruptive to adolescents, whose development is predominately determined by peer interaction.

Given this limitation of both research and theory, it was decided that a study would most advance this field of inquiry by focusing on the process of adapting to a corporate move and be concerned with the conditions under which a move may be more deleterious or beneficial to a child during crucial developmental stages in the child's life. Therefore the purpose of this study is to more closely examine mobile children and their perspectives on mobility.

This study investigates how mobile children view their adjustment to a corporate move by examining their own postmove attitudes towards moving, school and their new neighborhood. The study will examine what children think about moving and determine how corporate mobility disrupts the children's lives by examining changes in children's activities pre to post-move. The study will explore whether disruption occurs in predictable ways. The study will further investigate what makes moving better for some children than for others.

Research Hypotheses and Model

Most studies assessing the impact of corporate mobility on children's lives make an underlying assumption that the mobility disrupts children's lives and activities without data to support the disruption. In addition, few studies examine the effects of mobility on children's lives from the children's own viewpoint. Consequently, this study is a three-step analysis and begins by exploring children's perspectives on whether environmental change

in the form of a corporate move actually alters or disrupts the child's day to day activities.

Step one begins by using t-tests to determine how the child's environment changes premove to postmove. This study investigates pre to post-move changes in a child's time spent in the following activities: time by self, time with girlfriends, time with boyfriends, time reading and practicing lessons, time spent in sports, time spent with family, time spent in clubs, time spent watching television, and number of best friends. This set of variables, as a group, will subsequently be referred to as the child's 'activity set'.

After determining the areas of the child's environment which may have changed from pre to post-move, Step two of the study explores variables, pre and post-move, that may determine if any disruption in the postmove time spent in these activities is predictable in any way. Control variables added to predict changes in the activity set of this study are; mother's adjustment, children's age, sex, and number of previous moves. This portion of the study also examines the degree of school change (pre to postmove). This variable will assess if varying levels of school change, a surrogate measure for environmental change, impact the children's adjustment. Also, previous research suggests that time of year moved is another important variable of concern (Brett, 1980). Step two of this study will tell us if the disruption in the mobile children's activities is predictable by the above noted variables.

Step three of this study uses the activity set and the above noted control variables to predict how the children view their own pre and post-move adjustment by measuring children's own attitudes toward moving, school, and their neighborhood. In its entirety, this study allows us to examine children's own perceptions of their adjustment and to do so using different methods, measurements, and time periods.

Based on limited theory and associated literature review, this study proposes the following exploratory hypotheses. Simulating the three step analysis, the hypotheses are organized into three categories: 1) those related to changes in activities, 2) those related to predicting the changes in activities, and 3) those related to postmove attitudes.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Mobile children will have fewer social and school related activities and more familial and individualized activities after the move than before.

Hypothesis 2: Children's change in school related activities following a move can be predicted by the degree of school change (The greater the school change, the greater the change in activities associated with school), and age (the older the child the more activities change).

Hypothesis 3: Children's postmove attitudes can be positively predicted by premove attitudes, age (older children less positive attitudes), number of moves (as number of moves increase,

positive attitudes decrease), parental well-being (the more well adjusted the parents, the more positive a child's attitudes), and degree of school change (as degree of change increases, the more negative the attitudes).

Study Design

This study is a naturally occurring quasi-experiment. Data were collected after an employee had accepted a transfer, but before a family had moved and three months after a family had moved. Children were interviewed by telephone at both time periods. Data were also collected in a similar manner from mothers to obtain information regarding the mothers' adjustment, and to confirm age, sex, number of moves, etc.

The Sample

The sample for this study came from the work of Brett (1983) which was designed so that data could be generalized to employees who work for large U. S. corporations and thier families. This sample is a subset from within this major study with selection determined by those children within the Study who had moved during the eighteen month period of the full study. Five hundred employees, 50 from each of 10 Fortune 500 corporations, all of whom had moved at least once in the prior 2 to 5 years, were randomly selected from a list of 3,000 names supplied by the 10 companies. Three hundred and fifty families, a response rate of 70 percent, knowingly participated in the job transfer study. Twenty-nine of

these families moved again between May, 1978 when the first set of data were collected and November, 1979 when the last set of data were collected. This allowed for a total sample of 56 children ages 6-18. Table 3-1 notes there are 29 boys and 27 girls; there are 28 children (11 boys and 17 girls) between the ages of 6-11 and 28 children (18 boys and 10 girls) between the ages of 12-18. All of these children had moved at least once prior to the study with the mean number of moves being 4.4 and the range being 2 to 17 moves. The parents of these children were predominately college educated and middle income traditional families, with the father being the primary earner in the family.

Insert Table 3-1 about here

Measures

The questions asked children were based on those used by Douvan and Adelson (1966) and Barrett & Noble (1973). Questions regarding school adjustment are similar to those used by Hirsch and Rapkin (1987) and Orthner et al (1987). Principal components analyses were run on the activity dimensions and attitude dimensions to try to reduce the pre and post activity set and adjustment measures to fewer dimensions. Items that loaded together premove often loaded singly or on a totally different scale postmove. Since all children experienced a major environmental intervention (moving) between the two measurement

periods, it seemed plausible that the patterns of children's activities were changing pre to post-move. Consequently, only those items that loaded together pre and post-move and represented sufficient reliability were used as additive scales. The remaining items were used as single item measures.

Social and School Related Activity Measures

Time in sports: This measure questions time spent in sports and time on any athletic teams. Two item measure, no alpha.

Time spent in clubs: This measure includes such items as: 1) Do you belong to any clubs, 2) Time in organizations, and 3) Are you a leader in any clubs or organizations? Alpha for this measure was .66 time 2 and .63 time 3.

Number of best friends: Open ended question asking number of best friends.

Time with girlfriends: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Time with boyfriends: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Familial and Individual Activity Measures

Time with family: This measure determines: Time spent with brothers/sisters, and time spent with parents. (Two item measure, no alpha).

Time spent reading & lessons: This measure includes questions regarding time spent on reading excluding schoolwork and time spent

taking lessons such as piano and dance. (Two item measure, no alpha).

Time spent by self: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Time watching television: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Other Predictor Measures

Mothers' adjustment: This measure includes such items as: 1)How satisfied are you with your non-working activities? 2) Marriage? 3) Health? 4) Standard of Living? 5) Neighbors? 6) House? 7) Friendships 8) Family Life? Alpha for this measure was .83.

Time of year moved: Dummy variables used to represent a winter, spring, summer or fall move.

School change: An absolute change measure was created by subtracting pre from post-move reports regarding number of hard subjects, easy subjects, number of students in class, and number of teachers. This measure is used to determine an absolute measure of environmental change in the child's school environment.

Children's Attitude Measures

Premove/Postmove attitudes toward moving: This measure includes such items as 1) Are you happy about moving (having moved)? 2) Are you excited about moving (having moved)? 3) Are you angry about moving (having moved)? 4) Are you mad about

moving (having moved)? 5) Are you unhappy about moving (having moved)? Alpha for this measure was .83 time 2 and time 3.

Like school: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Like neighborhood: Single item measure with response choices of: 1. none, 2. some, 3. a little, 4. a lot.

Analysis

Paired t-tests were used to determine which activities had changed pre to post-move (tested in step one). Separate analyses were run for each activity.

Regression analysis was used to investigate the hypotheses predicting change and identify other correlates of changes in the activity set variables. Regression analysis was also used to predict children's postmove attitudes regarding moving, school and their neighborhood. Given the small sample (n=56) and exploratory nature of this investigation, stepwise regression was used. The expectation was that only a few variables would actually enter into the regression equation.

Results

The analysis first examines changes in the mobile children's activity set and then the predictors of the significant changes observed in the activity set. This section ends with a report on the children's pre and post-move attitudes toward moving, school, and neighborhood.

Step One: Changes In Activity Set

The t-tests of Table 3-2 note that time spent with boyfriends, reading/lessons, sports, and number of close friends is significantly different pre to post-move. All of these time spent in activity measures show significantly less time spent in these activities postmove than premove. Further analysis and t-tests show significantly less time spent with family postmove than premove for the teen movers in the sample. The remaining activities did not change significantly overall, but even these activities were lower pre to post-move.

Insert Table 3-2 about here

These findings show some support for hypothesis 1, in that these mobile children do have fewer social and school related activities, but fail to support the notion that these mobile children will spend more time with family and in individualized activities pre to post-move. An explanation of these findings may be complex. Further analysis showed no significant interaction between age and activities or sex and activities. Therefore ruling out interaction effects with these variables. By examining the means in Table 3-2, one notes the most stable pre to post activity was Time Spent By Self. Perhaps the addition of a control group of children who had not moved would show this a significant difference from non-moving children; thereby more fully supporting hypothesis one. It should be cautioned, however, that this is

merely speculative and further research is required to more fully explain this finding.

Step Two: Predicting Changes In Activity Set

The second step of this study investigated those activities that were significantly disrupted pre to post-move (as identified in the t-tests in step one). The goal of this portion of the study was to determine whether the time spent in these activities changed in any predictable way. Similar to Study 1, Table 3-3 shows the best predictor of the postmove activities was time spent in these activities premove. Despite a major change in these mobile children's lives, time spent in activities premove was still the best predictor of time spent in these activities after the move.

Insert Table 3-3 about here

While time spent with boys premove was the best predictor of postmove time spent with boys, age was also a negative predictor of postmove time spent with boys (Beta= .46, $p < .01$; -.23, $p < .06$ respectively). Younger children were more likely to spend time with boys after the move than older children. It was suspected that sex may play an important role in this finding. Yet, there was no interaction of age by sex and time spent with boys in this data. Both teen boys and girls were less likely to spend time with boys postmove.

Time spent reading/practicing lessons premove was the best predictor of time spent reading/lessons postmove. Girls were more likely to spend time reading & practicing lessons postmove than boys.

Premove time with family, age (younger children favored), and sex (girls favored) are the best predictors of postmove time spent with family (Beta = .37, $p < .01$; -.37, $p < .01$; and .34, $p < .01$ respectively). Together, these variables predict 39% of the variance in time spent with the family postmove dimension.

Time spent in sports premove and sex of child (girls favored) best predict time in sports postmove (Beta = .36, $p < .01$; .24, $p < .06$ respectively). Number of friends premove and degree of school change are the best predictors of number of friends postmove (Beta = .39, $p < .01$; .24, $p < .06$ respectively).

In summary, all of these findings suggest a great deal of stability in mobile children's activities. Despite the fact that there were significant changes pre to post-move in five of the eight activities measured, the way children spend their time premove continues to be the best predictor of how they will spend their time postmove. Time of year moved and mother's adjustment never entered into the equation as a predictor of time spent in activities.

The other major predictor of time spent in these activities was age and sex. Older children and boys do seem to have more significant change in their time spent in these activities than younger children and girls. The change has been to spend less time

in these activities. To suggest that this is a negative or positive finding for mobile children would be making interpretations beyond the scope of the data. Further research is required to sort out the implications of these findings.

Step Three: Predictors of Children's Attitudes

Premove Attitudes Toward Moving. Premove attitudes toward moving were a function of time spent with girlfriends, number of prior moves, and time spent in clubs. Children who spent more time with girlfriends were less enthusiastic about moving than those who spent less time with girls (Beta = -.38, $p < .01$). This finding may be related to research on peer friendship that suggests that girls prefer more close intimate friendships than boys (see Small, 1988). Further research is needed, but it seems reasonable, then that the children in this study who had close friendships with girls were more reluctant to move.

Insert Table 3-4 about here

Number of prior moves positively affected children's premove attitudes toward the move (Beta = .28, $p < .05$). The more frequently a child had moved previously (controlling for age) the more enthusiastic the child was about the upcoming move. These frequent movers may be enthusiastic about moving because it holds no surprises or because due to frequent moving, they are not

particularly well-integrated into their present school or community and have fewer reasons to be upset by yet another move.

Time spent in clubs was also a positive predictor of premove attitudes toward moving (Beta = .25, p. < .05). Children who were active in clubs premove were most enthusiastic about the next move. Social membership may serve as a rough indicator of social skills.

Postmove Attitudes Toward Moving. Postmove attitudes toward moving were best predicted by premove attitudes toward moving and mother's postmove adjustment (Beta = .52, p < .001; .29, p <.01, respectively). These results are consistent with those in Study 1 that showed parents' assessments of children's adjustment were fairly stable despite a move. These data show further that children's own attitudes toward moving are quite stable despite a move. The findings that change in attitudes toward moving were associated with mothers' adjustment is also consistent with other research that points to the importance of a parent's well-being on children's adjustment (Small, 1988). These results make an important addition to this area of study in that the mothers' well-being is the mothers' self report and children's attitudes towards moving are their own reports. Thus, this study supports findings using varying perspectives of the parent and child.

None of the activities that changed after the move were significant predictors of postmove attitudes. So, despite considerable disruption in these children's activity patterns (5 of 8 variables in the activity set had changed pre to post-move)

these changes were not important predictors of postmove attitudes. Consequently, environmental instability had no effect on these children's adjustment, as measured in this study. Contrastingly Mothers' adjustment and children's premove attitudes account for 38 % of the variance in postmove attitudes towards moving.

Premove Attitudes Toward School. Number of premove best friends and time spent in clubs were significant predictors of premove attitudes toward school (Beta = .38, p. <.01); .25, p. < .05, respectively). The more close friends and the more clubs the child belonged to, the more positive the child's premove attitude toward school.

Postmove Attitudes Toward School. Premove attitudes toward school were the only predictors of postmove attitudes toward school (Beta = .39, p < .01). So, despite changing schools, and regardless of degree of school change, children who liked their school before the move were the same ones who like school after the move. Despite the social disruption in these children's activity set, their basic attitudinal orientation toward school was unchanged. It is also interesting to note that even with the addition of premove attitudes toward school in the postmove attitude toward school equation, the total predictability of the postmove school model is less than the premove attitude toward school model. Furthermore, neither of the models predict much variance in pre/post attitudes toward school (Adjusted R^2 = .20, p < .001; .14, p, .001 respectively), suggesting there are several other things going on in the children's lives which were not tapped

by this school adjustment model. This still contributes to the field of study in that future research may examine other variables when predicting children's school adjustment. Also, perhaps more open-ended interviews could have contributed more complete information.

Pre and Post-move Attitudes Toward Neighborhood. Premove attitudes toward the neighborhood were best predicted by premove attitudes toward school (Beta = .32, $p < .01$). The best predictors of postmove attitudes toward the neighborhood were premove attitudes toward moving and mothers' adjustment (Beta = .47, $p < .001$; .34 $p < .01$; respectively). These two variables accounted for 36 percent of the variance in postmove attitudes toward neighborhood. It is interesting that premove attitudes toward the neighborhood did not predict postmove attitudes toward the neighborhood. The major pattern of findings has been continuity of adjustment and attitudes pre and post-move. Perhaps the contrast between school and neighborhood attitudes makes the point best. Children who do well in school and make friends easily can carry over such experience from school to school. These stable experiences are reflected in the stability of their attitudes and parental ratings of adjustment (Study 1). Yet, attitudes toward the neighborhood may be our purest measure of a changed environment as there would seem to be few stable individual characteristics relevant to this attitude that children carry with them from place to place. With this attitude, premove attitudes toward moving may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Children's attitudes toward the neighborhood was also predicted by mothers' adjustment. This is an interesting finding because mothers' adjustment is from the mothers' perspective and children's attitudes are from children's perspectives. The intercorrelation between these variables from varying perspective show further support for findings regarding mother's well-being affecting children's adjustment and self-confidence. This becomes an important finding because they are similar findings yet using different perspective, measures, methods and time periods; thereby more strongly supporting the importance of mothers' well-being to children's adjustment.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 of this study is only marginally supported by the data. True, children did spend less time in social and school related activities, but there were no significant results predicting more time with family and individualized activities. In fact, mobile teens seem to spend less time with family premove than postmove. Perhaps this is due to fathers' increased work load at a new location and more limited access to his family due to the new job. Yet, one would suspect the same to be true for young children as well. It does appear that the type of time spent with teens versus young children might account for this difference. Older children also spend less time with boyfriends after a move.

Girls appear to take up more of their time than boys postmove by reading and taking lessons, participating in sports, and with

their family than boys. Yet, the fact that the data do not show that teens nor young children spend significantly more time by themselves or with the family is a puzzle requiring further research.

The data also show marginal support for hypothesis 2. Some of the changes in mobile children's activities did have significant predictors. Age negatively predicted postmove time with boys and time with family. Sex predicted postmove time spent on reading and lessons, time spent with family, and time spent in sports (girls favored). Yet, the degree of school change had no significant impact on time spent in any of these activities. Consequently, children were unaffected by varying degrees of changes in their school environment, as measured by this study.

The data also show some support for hypothesis 3. Although there is some significant difference in the activity set, premove activities still remain the best predictors of postmove time spent in activities supporting hypothesis 3. Mothers' adjustment also supported hypothesis 3 by being an important predictor of attitudes toward moving and neighborhood. The more well adjusted the child's mother, the better the child's attitude toward moving and neighborhood. This may be predominately due to the mothers' more traditional role and responsibilities in these mobile families' lives.

Degree of school change and age were not factors predicting postmove attitudes. This finding is contrary to findingd from Orthner et al (1984) which suggested that teens had increasingly

more difficulty in social adjustment. This study, using the children's perspectives shows no difference between young and teen children's attitudes.

Number of moves turned out to be a positive predictor of premove attitudes toward moving rather than having a negative influence as hypothesized. This finding is similar to other research by Kroger (1980) and Barrett and Nobel (1973) which found no negative effects of number of moves on children's adjustment. The findings regarding the importance of premove attitudes, mothers' adjustment, and number of moves all support findings from previous studies. These findings gain increased validity when supported from different perspectives, measures, methods, and time periods.

Yet, the hypothesis and past research regarding the increased difficulty for adolescence in adjustment to a move was not supported at all by this study. Adolescence did not have more negative attitudes than young children. The findings do note, however, that time spent in activities premove are more likely to predict time spent in activities postmove for young children than for teens. But, to impose a negative or positive connotation to this finding could be misleading. Further research is required to sort out this phenomena.

In sum, the importance of premove attitudes, mothers' adjustment, and number of moves in predicting postmove attitudes support findings from previous research. It does so using different perspectives, measures, methods, and time periods. Yet

it is important to note that these findings should be regarded with caution. As in any study, there are several limitations to the study that need to be kept in mind when reviewing results.

First, although the data allowed us to examine many aspects of the children's pre and post-move environment, some aspects of the child's environment remain untapped. For instance, a child may have the same number of close friends, or be in the same number of sporting activities pre to post-move, but the quality of the friendships or sporting activities may be more less or more enjoyable. Second, only one of the dependent variables, attitudes towards moving, was a multiple-item index measure. Attitudes toward school and neighborhood were single-item measures, with limited reliability. Third, the sample size was relatively small especially for identifying differences between children categorized by age and sex. Fourth, without a control group of children who did not move, we cannot rule out the possibility that changes in activities and attitudes over the four months of this study might have occurred to children regardless of moving.

Yet, some alternative threats caused by the lack of a control group may not be as strong a threat to this portion of the study as one might first suspect. For instance, maturation is less of a threat, given the time period between the moving intervention is merely four months, leading one to believe that changes in pre to post-move findings might not be a result of dramatic changes in maturation. In addition, these findings, when used in conjunction with previous research have an important contribution to make to

this literature.

Conclusion

The results of this study confirmed none of the stereotypes presented in the introduction of this paper. Yet, it was not the intent of this study to disprove these stereotypes nor to diminish the stress which may be associated with any such major change in the mobile children's lives. It is, however, interesting to note that the differences between the results of this empirical investigation of corporate mobile children and the popular press' view of these children is vast.

In contrast to the popular literature, this study found no long-term negative effects associated with a mobile childhood characterized by multiple moves, as opposed to a relatively stable one in which one might expect perhaps a single move. This study found no negative short-term effects of moving. Children who moved during the 18 month study were quick to repeat premove levels of acitvities. In fact, the strongest and most consistent finding of this study is that premove attitudes or adjustment, from the children's own perspective, were the best predictors of postmove attitudes or adjustment.

The results of this study are similar to those from much of the research on latchkey children in which the null hypothesis is supported (see Steinberg, 1986). Despite what appears to be socially undesirable circumstances (child self-care in the case of latchkey children; mobility in the case of the children we are studying), children living in these conditions are not

significantly different pre to postmove. There are other important parallels in the findings of these two research topics.

For instance, like the findings for latchkey children, the most interesting findings relate to the significant differences within the sample of mobile children, findings that may have important policy implications for corporations and mobile families as well.

As with the latchkey children, mobile children whose parents are well adjusted are themselves better adjusted. Using children's perspectives and measures, mothers' well-being was correlated with children's postmove attitudes toward moving and number of friends postmove, as well as children's attitude toward their new neighborhood. These finding have important implications for those families contemplating a corporate move. In a traditional family, if mother's have not adjust well to a move, the children's attitudes and adjustment may also be affected. Of course, the opposite may also be true. Parental well-being may suffer when faced with a child who has adjusted poorly to a move. Further research is required to sort out this phenomena. But, the important point here is that when children's social networks have temporarily been disrupted by a move, parents can provide the needed social support. A quote from an essay on the effects of job transfer on children, written by a college student who had a mobile childhood, illustrates the point:

I believe that I became a stronger person because

> of our move. I learned to start over in a new environment, to make friends, and to adapt to new norms.....Also my strong sense of family was reinforced; I learned that my family will always be there for me even when I feel alone in all other aspects of my life.

Obviously, this person views the childhood mobility as a positive factor in their development, the other obvious important factor was the family support throughout a difficult transition. This quote is surely consistent with findings from this study suggesting the importance of a mother's well-being to adjustment.

Another major finding of this study is the effect of number of moves on adjustment. Children's attitudes toward moving were positively predicted by number of prior moves. Prior experience with moving may ease some of the anxiety normally associated with change and increase self confidence about being able to adjust. Alternatively, one might hypothesize that those children who have moved frequently may be less well integrated into their existing school and social environment and therefore may be more willing to make yet another move.

The mobile children's own ratings were not dependent on age. Adolescents in this study adjusted equally well as young children in the study. This study is inconsistent with research which suggests major changes in a child's life during adolescence is especially difficult due to cumulated effects of biological and

social changes already going on in thier lives. Further research is needed on this important topic. In sum, the major findings of this study appear to disprove the stereotypes present in the popular press. Mobile children seem to move toward premove levels of adjustment very shortly after a move. Premove activities, attitudes, or adjustment are the best predictors of postmove activities, attitudes, or adjustment regardless of perspective taken. There were no short term negative effects associated with moving; number of moves positively affects mobile children's attitudes toward moving. More research is needed to sort out the longer term implications of number of moves on adjustment.

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Table 3-1

Number of Mobile Children Broken Down by Age and Sex

Sex	6-11 Years	12-18 Years	Total
Boys	11	18	29
Girls	17	10	27
Total	28	28	56

Table 3-2

Activities Pre and Post Move

Activity	Premove			Postmove			t
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	
Self	2.68	.96	56	2.66	.86	56	.12
Girlfriends	2.52	1.10	56	2.36	1.12	56	.95
Boyfriends	3.04	.99	56	2.70	1.06	56	2.33*
Clubs	4.23	1.48	56	3.98	1.31	56	1.12
Reading & lessons	4.73	1.58	56	4.11	1.50	56	3.01**
Sports	4.70	1.21	56	4.25	1.25	56	2.41*
Number of friends	3.75	1.51	56	3.30	1.62	56	1.94*
Time with family	5.70	1.36	56	5.61	1.37	56	.45
Time with family(teens only)	5.96	1.36	23	5.22	.95	23	2.83**

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Table 3-3

Beta Coefficient, Multiple Rs, Adjusted R^2s, and F-Value For Predictors of Postmove Activities

Independent Variables	Postmove Activities: Time with Boyfriends	Time Reading & Taking Lesson	Time with Family	Sports	No. of Friends
Premove Activities					
Time with boyfriend	.46***				
Reading & lessons		.46***			
Time with family			.37***		
Sports				.36***	
No. of friends					.39***
Predictor Variables					
Mothers' adjustment					.24*
School change			-.37***		
Age	-.23*				
Sex		.26**	.34***	.24*	
Multiple R	.46	.55	.65	.36	.39
Adjusted R^2	.20	.28	.39	.12	.14
F	14.55***	11.58***	12.82***	8.25***	9.71***

Note. 1)Sex is coded 1 = boys, 2 = girls. Therefore, a positive score suggests girls are favored.
N = 56

* $p < .06$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

Table 3-4
Beta Coefficient, Mutliple Rs, Adjusted R^2, and F-Value for Dependent Adjustment Variables

	Premove Adjustment			Postmove Adjustment		
Independent Variables	Attitude Toward Moving	Attitude Toward School	Attitude Toward Neighborhood	Attitude Toward Moving	Attitude Toward School	Attitude Toward Neighborhood
Time 1 attitudes						
Moving				.52***		.47***
School			.32**		.39**	
Neighborhood						
Predictor Variables						
Mother's Adjustment(T_2 or T_3)				.29*		.34**
Age						
Sex						
No. of moves	.28*					
Time of year moved						
School change						
Parents' perceptions of adjustment						
Activity Set(T_2 or T_3)						
Time in clubs	.25*	.25*				
Time with girlfriends	-.38**					
No. of friends		.38**				
Time with self						
Time with boyfriends						
Time reading & lessons						
Time in sports						
Time with family						
Time watching TV						
Multiple R	.48	.48	.32	.63	.39	.62
Adjusted R^2	.18	.20	.09	.38	.14	.36
F	5.15**	7.99***	6.11**	17.90**	9.91**	16.67**

Note. 1) Sex is coded 1 = boys, 2 = girls. Therefore, a positive score suggests girls are favored.
N=56
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$